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## A Basketful of All Sorts of Eggs





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# A Basketful of All Sorts of Eggs

Anne S. Watkins

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Jonathan Farm  
Mount Kisco in New York

1911

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To  
My Husband  
These Poems  
Are Affectionately  
Inscribed



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## Advice to Cocks

**I** DOFF my hat to you, Sir Cock,  
Strutting the barnyard beats,  
And I would talk to you, Sir,  
About the hens one meets.

So when you're cutting the pigeon wing  
To get a hen for wife,  
You'll look up one who lays good eggs,  
And make the best of life.

If one would be a family cock,  
Then stop all dissipations,  
And choose a wife with some idea  
To future generations.

It is usually best to select, therefore,  
From a breed that is old and tried,  
For when chicks turn out particularly bad  
They take after the mother's side.

Avoid that fluffy-ruffles hen,  
However hard she tries  
To lay and set, she'll fume and fret,  
Then hatch out butterflies.

Beware the draggled, faded sort,  
The idol of the rakes,  
Who plays and eats and drinks with you,  
She only gives you snakes.

Those high-browed, bookish, learned hens,  
Who write "Does marriage pay?"  
What sort of chicks do they have?  
Why, they don't even lay.

But the world is full of fresh, fine hens,  
Who drop their eggs in the morning dew,  
Who make their nests in the low, sweet bush,  
That blossoms for me and you.

And Oh, Sir Cock, she cheerfully broods  
While you are foraging some,  
Then one day she calls, excited to death,  
"Oh, Papa, the chickens have come."

And, Sir, I congratulate you!  
Your children, so far as chickens are able,  
Will fill, I am sure, their best mission in life,  
Be called "Fine" on some gentleman's table.

## The Basil Plant

I MET a woman with golden eyes,  
A head of jet-black tousled hair,  
With full red lips that were pouting lies,  
And the tilt to her nose was a positive snare.

Her cheeks like the sunny side of peaches  
Were touched with a soft, alluring down,  
Her attitudes merely sinuous reaches,  
Swathed in a subtle Paris gown.

A glance, and I followed her into the night  
To some spot that lent itself to my feeling,  
And there, forgetting all manly fight,  
With burning desire and senses reeling,

I gave her all that passion can give,  
I offered her all that love can achieve,  
I became her slave, and soon I lived  
A life that made the angels grieve.

When all things hoped, were dying or dead,  
"Who are you?" I cried, and then—and then—  
"I am the basil plant," she said:  
"I feed on the brains of men and men."

## A Plea for the Paper Sport

**A** WOMAN lived in our town,  
A very wondrous sort;  
The other females called her "fast,"  
But I, "A Paper Sport."

She'd meet a man from north or south,  
The east or from the west,  
She'd crawl right up his shirt front,  
And nestle in his chest.

Purse up her pretty lip-stick mouth  
Beseechingly at his,  
He nearly always kissed her;  
That's if he knew his biz.

And then that chappie's wife, all fussed,  
Would vow she'd take her hat,  
But there isn't much in kissing  
If you keep on doing that.

Dear me, she'd twirl her teasing skirts,  
Quite almost to the garter;  
She even roused an Englishman,  
To say "Jove! What a starter!"

Once though, she met a Gothamite,  
Who was a trifle tough,  
He lured her to a darkish place,  
And tried to call her bluff,

And then this pusillanimous one  
Got a most awful shock,  
She ran her rumpled toilet  
A mortal city block.

Oh, Mothers, Wives and Sweethearts,  
With vampires thick in every port,  
Don't mind lending your old goods awhile  
To the harmless "Paper Sport."

# The Maid from Billingsgate

An Adaptation

**W**ELL, w'at's the use of it all?" Oi says  
To Missus Peter Kraus,  
She's the frumpy, lyin' thief  
W'at keeps this boardin' 'ouse.

Precious lot of boarders, oin't they?  
Picture men and music, too,  
Er re-ti-red General Nobody,  
We've even got er Jew.

One woman says she is related  
To some quality or other;  
Backbiters, cheaters, all of them,  
Tryin' to fool one another.

That artist, offerin' me paste jew'ls,  
To leave my door unlocked—'thout fail,  
Oi guess Oi've got his number,  
And Oi'm just h'out of jail.

T'er that little Simkins girl, Oi says,  
Says Oi, to her one day,  
"W'at's the good of it all, Miss,  
Oin't you got to wed er roué?"

"Look 'ere, oin't there no other loife?"

She's a clevah witch;

"Yes, yes," she answered, "Maggie,

But it's only for the rich."

Well, missus lacked a boarder, once,

So Oi put up a card,

And bye-and-bye there came a knock,

Good—and—hard.

"Run" says missus, and Oi did,

Then came back to report,

She turned, "Well, w'at's it like?" "Don't know,

He oin't the usual sort."

Well, that man! Somehow, all of us

Thought we had seen him once before,

And this awful joint, that Oi called 'ell,

Is now become the parlour floor.

He proved the artist was a gent,

The missus was a loidy,

General Jinks—a philanthrerpist,

And said the Jew Christ wasn't shady.

He made the baronet's niece be glad,

To be just plain "Miss Glover,"

Made the roué put up swag

To wed Simpkins to her lover.

Stole away then, like a spirit;

Saying, "Of all Oi loved thee most."

Oi never knew who he could be,

Gee, He was a Holy Ghost!

## The Reflections of a Cynical Husband

**H**EART of the red, red rose,  
As the ruby flashes and glows;  
A voluptuous beauty with eyes of brown,  
And I succumbed to a scarlet gown.

Breath of roses white,  
Our first born lies dead to-night,  
And the soul of the flaming beauty is daunted,  
For once in life she can't have what she wanted.



## From Me to You

O H, give me a man with tenderness!  
Who looks sorry when I cry,  
Who pets, and pats and kisses and loves,  
And says, "It will all come right, bye and bye."

Who says "Little wifies will have headaches,  
Little mothers will have fears,  
That kiddies always cut their toofies  
Before they ever reach two years."

A man who says "Well Precious,  
Did that hussy spoil your gown?  
You were so keen about it,  
I'd like to drive her out of town."

But there, just buy another one,  
It makes you plain to fret,  
A secret—made five thou' on Steel;  
Closed yesterday, yes, you bet."

He always sides with you in public,  
Whether you're right or wrong;  
Whenever you are leaving him  
He says "Pet, don't stay long."

And yet if you are ill for years,  
    Oh, melancholy fate!  
He has the courage and the patience  
    To live alone and wait.

Most men are heroic in strenuous times,  
    When the house is on fire or mother lies dead,  
But there aren't many tragedies, little things count,  
    The everyday man, when all's done and said.

The conquerors in battles, the kings who rule well,  
    Napoleons or Cæsars with all their success  
Aren't the great men of history, mine to relate;  
    Oh, give me a man with tenderness.

# The Psychological Number

**S**HE has eyes that see,  
Her mouth is clean,  
Her heart is pure,  
She is simple and fine;  
For this story begins  
Where most stories leave off,  
So here's to the woman  
Of thirty-nine!

She has loved and borne,  
She has buried and lived,  
To know what it is  
To be simple and fine.  
For this story begins  
Where most stories leave off  
With the woman  
Of thirty-nine.

Had I been a bachelor,  
Hypercritical,  
I'd have wooed not  
The clinging vine,  
For the comrade—the partner  
In *sorrow* and joy  
Is the woman  
Of thirty-nine.

If I'm ever a widower  
All forlorn,  
Bereft of a wife  
    That is fine,  
Do you know, I'll begin  
Just where I left off  
With a woman  
    Of thirty-nine?

And how, little one,  
Should I presume  
The sweetest age  
    Of woman divine?  
Because I feel sanctified  
In the presence  
Of my sweetheart  
    Of thirty-nine.

## Some Modern Pantheism

**Y**OU may read of kings and lords and dukes,  
The triumphs of great heroes and their flukes,  
But softly turn the lights low, close the door,  
I'm going to tell you what I know of spooks.

My spook has always been, and always will be,  
And this is true of you as well as me,  
Sub-Conscious Mind; The Still Small Voice; Soul;  
Your Better Self Twin Brother; this is he.

It is your object chief in life, therefore,  
To escape the espionage of this deadly bore,  
To drug him, fool him, buy him, if you can,  
To give you what you think you want—or more.

If you wish to make a date with some fair queen,  
For supper, drink and pleasure—all unseen;  
It isn't always nice to take a third,  
So you give the Twin a dose of strong codein.

You have your toot with chorus girl, High Life,  
Return home, feeling stupid, ill and rife,  
A voice calls to you grim from 'way upstairs,  
The spook you put to sleep is now your wife.

Say you wish to play the market for a rise,  
Your Twin comes sneaking 'round just to advise;  
A thousand shares of U. P. is your choice;  
But Taft, says spook, will give you a surprise.

And when the Board has taken a tumble rare,  
You rack your brains to see if you're all there,  
Taft, it turns out, isn't Big Surprise,  
The spook that's after you is Teddy Bear.

Not only have you got to please *your* Twin,  
But the other fellow's spook can put you in  
A heaven of health or hell of dread disease,  
He can keep you looking fat or thin.

This tale of mine I tell without elation,  
No moral has it except---transmigration;  
God is good, and good is God, I think,  
And all the spooks in spookdom are creation.

## If Women Won't Help Politics—Politics Will Help Them

THERE'S a lot of talk going around,  
About the woman who wants to vote;  
She argues man in logic, sound  
As Mills or Spencer ever wrote.

There's also a Society Suffragist,  
Who talks partly sane and partly coquettes,  
She adds your influence to her list,  
As she toys with the dinner croquettes.

The one who pines to go to jail,  
Adding notoriety to the cause;  
She is the Suffragette, hearty and hale,  
Who harangues the street and paws.

So, for my part, I say, let her have her way,  
She's intelligent, taxed and humane,  
And women get always what they want some day,  
Our struggle with them is but vain.

This, also, I say, she smokes not nor drinks,  
She's the uplifting force, by poets sung,  
Keeps the moral code—so everyone thinks,  
Doesn't fight,—her sole outlet is the tongue.

So perhaps her tongue would wag more kind,  
If she dived into questions of civic note,  
The snobbishness, gossip and scandal we find,  
Would abate with the right to vote.



## Summer-time

OH, I want to go up in the hills  
And lay me down on the earth,  
'Neath a tree where the mocking bird trills  
And the bees are humming their mirth.

Oh, I want to hear grasshoppers scraping  
Their complaints upon their hind legs  
And see all the winged things mating,  
Nesting and laying their eggs.

To hear the whippoorwill cry  
From out the wood by the river,  
And think how I would hate to die,  
And sit up all in a shiver.

Oh, I want to get drunk on the smell  
That the sun extracts from the ground,  
I want to sleep long and well  
On this splendid secret I've found,

And then to be waked with a kiss,  
Let fall from eventide  
Full of the dew drops' bliss,  
And all other sweets beside.

I want with me never a man  
Proudly jawing his phrases,  
I just want to learn what I can  
From the big eyed, intelligent daisies.

Yes, I want to talk with the Maker  
Of all this lovely creation,  
To thank Him that I am partaker,  
Exalted whatever my station.

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